Amendments to the Claims

1. (Presently Amended) A process of preparing a composite comprised of at least one elastomer which contains a dispersion therein of a functionalized carbon black comprises blending a particulate, functionalized carbon black with

(A) an organic solvent solution of a conjugated diene-based elastomer selected from at least one elastomer as a homopolymer of isoprene and/or 1,3-butadiene and elastomer as a copolymer of isoprene and/or 1,3-butadiene with styrene, followed by removing said solvent therefrom to recover said composite, or

(B) an aqueous emulsion of a styrene/butadiene copolymer elastomer followed by removing said water therefrom to recover said composite;

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wherein said functionalized carbon black is a rubber reinforcing carbon black modified by having domains of at least one moiety on the surface thereof selected from

(A) ~~silanol, siloxane,~~ titanium oxide, titanium hydroxide, zirconium oxide, zirconium hydroxide and aluminum hydroxide groups;

(B) aryl polysulfide, alkyl polysulfide, thiol, thiophenol, epoxide, allyl and vinyl groups; and

(C) dibenzyldisulfide, ditolydisulfide, bis(propyl)disulfide, bis(propyl)tetrasulfide, n-propyl thiol, n-butyl thiol, orthomethylthiophenol, n-propyl epoxide, n-butyl epoxide, methyl allyl, propyl allyl, methyl vinyl and propyl vinyl groups;

wherein said domains on the surface of said functionalized carbon black optionally also contain at least one of silanol and siloxane groups.

2. (Presently amended) The process of claim 1 wherein said composite is prepared adding said functionalized carbon black as a dispersion thereof in an organic solvent to an organic solvent solution of elastomer wherein said domains on the surface of said functionalized carbon black are exclusive of silanol and siloxane groups.

3. (Presently amended) The process of claim wherein said composite is composite is

prepared by adding said functionalized carbon black as a dispersion thereof in water to an aqueous emulsion of said styrene/butadiene elastomer wherein said domains on the surface of said functionalized carbon black are exclusive of silanol and siloxane groups.

4. (Original) The process of claim 2 wherein said solvent solution of said elastomer is a polymerizate.

5. (Original) A composite is provided which is comprised of an elastomer with a dispersion therein of a functionalized carbon black prepared by the method of claim 1.

6. (Original) The composite of claim 5 which contains an additional reinforcing filler selected from at least one of carbon black and amorphous precipitated silica.

7. (Cancelled)

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8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) An article of manufacture having at least one component comprised of the composite of claim 5.

11. (Original) A tire having at least one component comprised of the composite of claim 5.

12. (Original) A tire having at least one component comprised of the composite of claim 6.

13. (Original) A tire having at least one component comprised of the composite of claim 7.

14. (Original) A tire having at least one component comprised of the composite of claim 8.

15. (Presently amended) A tire having ~~a tread~~ at least one component comprised of the composite of claim ~~5~~ 21.

16. (Presently amended) A tire having ~~a tread~~ at least one component comprised of the composite of claim ~~6~~ 22.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (New) A composite comprised of an elastomer with a dispersion therein of a functionalized carbon black prepared by the method of claim 2.

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22. (New) A composite comprised of an elastomer with a dispersion therein of a functionalized carbon black prepared by the method of claim 3.

23. (New) The composite of claim 21 which contains an additional reinforcing filler selected from at least one of carbon black and amorphous precipitated silica.

24. (New) The composite of claim 22 which contains an additional reinforcing filler selected from at least one of carbon black and amorphous precipitated silica.